

THE CIVIC MUSIC ASSOCIATION

PRESENTS

RUDOLF SERKIN

Pianist

IN CONCERT



PROGRAM

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Adagio
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- Eine kleine Gigue*Mozart*
- Sonata in C major, Opus 53.....*Beethoven*
Allegro con brio
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- Two ~~Moments Musical~~ *Impromptu 90*, Opus 94.....*Schubert*
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a—pour les notes repetees
b—pour les accordes
- Barcarolle, F sharp major*Chopin*
- Polonaise, A flat major, Opus 53.....*Chopin*

CIVIC CONCERT SERVICE, INC.

George Engles, President

New York

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30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City)

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ANNOTATIONS FOR PROGRAM

Adagio from "Fantasie in C minor" *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*
(1756-1791)

The *C minor Fantasie* was composed in 1785; it has been called Mozart's best work for piano. One writer believes that it is similar to Mozart's celebrated improvisations: "outpourings that wandered into harmonies rich and strange." This work, which is without definite form, is in five movements; throughout the whole runs a current of unrest. It is similar in spirit to the *C minor Sonata*. The *Adagio*, which is the opening movement, is reflective and serious in tone, modulating freely, almost fantastically, from key to key. The second theme is sincere and expressive.

Menuetto in D major *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*

The minuet is supposedly of French origin, its name coming from the French *menu*, small, which referred to the short steps of the dance. Some authorities believe that it originally came from the province of Poitou, others believe that Lully composed the first dance of this type. It was a stately dance, slow in tempo and ceremonious in character. Bach used the form as one of the movements in his *suites* and *partitas* and Haydn used the form in his works; he retained the old form but changed the spirit. In his minuets the prevailing tone is light-hearted and humorous, often developing into downright fun. Mozart also retained the old form, but in his hands the minuet became suave, tender, and graceful, again suitable for courts.

Eine kleine Gigue *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*

The *gigue* was an old Italian dance, deriving its name from the Giga, or early fiddle. It also was used and perfected by Bach and used in his *suites*. It is written in any of 3-8, 6-8, 3-4, 6-4, or 12-8 tempos. The dance is in two sections, each of which is repeated. This *Gigue* was written by Mozart in 1789 while he was in Leipzig.

Sonata in C major, Opus 53 *Ludwig von Beethoven*
(1770-1827)

The *C major Sonata*, often known as the *Waldstein*, was composed in 1804 during Beethoven's stay at Dobling, a little village just north of Vienna. It was dedicated to his patron, Count von Waldstein.

Allegro con brio: Introductory chords in the bass form the background; a crescendo and then a sudden silence prepare the way for an *agitato* episode after which the calm and *religioso* second subject enters. There is a meditative variation on the second subject. In the development and recapitulation sections, suppressed, restless and pastoral elements

are brought out in many aspects and in unexpected combinations. The *Coda* begins with the main theme which leads to a brilliant cadenza built on syncopated octaves and contrawise scale passages. The second theme is heard again. The movement concludes in a paean of joy and triumph.

Introduzione: Adagio molto: The place of the slow movement is taken by an *Adagio* introduction to the *Finale*. This movement is of prelude-like character. In it, toward the middle, there rises—for the first time in the sonata—a warm melody. After six measures this is interrupted by the preludising phrase of the opening which now raises its question even more intensely and impressively.

Rondo: Allegretto moderato: This final movement might be suggestive of a village fete with its merry making and jollity. It begins with a happy, quasi-pastoral tune, which, gradually increasing, rises to a jubilant key. This theme appears four times; the third and fourth times it grows into a full-throated hymn of joy. Episodes separate or connect these repetitions of the chief theme. There are contrasting moods, symphonic combinations, grandiose climaxes, and finally the music is whipped into a delirium of joyful ecstasy, and the sonata ends.

Two Moments Musical, Opus 94.....*Franz Schubert*
(1797-1828)

Franz Schubert lived and died in almost total obscurity. The musicians, patrons, and music lovers of his day were too interested in Italian music to recognize the genius of his compositions. He did not suffer from opposition and prejudice as did Beethoven, rather he was totally ignored. However, if he had to face the indifference of the public, he did have a few good and faithful friends who encouraged and helped him. Earning a scant living, first as a teacher, then as a musician, Schubert struggled, composing in every available moment. From his pen has come, ten symphonies, six hundred songs, chamber music, and piano compositions.

The *Moments Musical* with the *Impromptus* are the best of all Schubert's compositions for piano. It is not known just when they were written, but they were published in the last year of his life. They are among the most charming and characteristic of all his works. In mood and texture they are closely related to the intermezzo form.

Two Etudes*Claude Achille Debussy*
(1862-1918)

In 1915 Debussy was asked by the publisher, Durand, to collaborate in a revision of the classics for a French edition. He chose Chopin, whom he had admired since his student days, and whom his friends thought he resembled in his method of playing the piano, for Debussy too had an exquisitely fluent, warm and sweet touch. During this same year he composed a set of twelve etudes which he dedicated "à la memoire de Frederic Chopin." These etudes are exercises in technique, each one

dealing with some particular problem. When Debussy sent these to his friend, Andre Captel, he described them sarcastically as containing "a thousand different ways of treating pianists according to their deserts."

Barcarolle, F sharp major.....Frederic Chopin
(1810-1849)

This *Barcarolle in F sharp major* was the only one which Chopin wrote. It was published in September, 1846, and was dedicated to Mme. la Baronne de Stockhausen.

Tausig, the great piano virtuoso, described it as follows: "There are two persons concerned in the affair; it is a love scene in a discreet gondola; let us say this *mise-en-scène* is the symbol of a lover's meeting generally. This is expressed in thirds and sixths; the dualism of two notes—persons—is maintained throughout; all is two-voiced, two-souled. In this modulation in C sharp major—superscribed *dolce sfogato*—there are the kiss and the embrace! This is evident! When, after three bars of introduction, the theme, lightly rocking in the bass solo, enters in the fourth, this theme is nevertheless made use of throughout the whole fabric only as an accompaniment, and on this cantilena in two parts is laid; we have thus a continuous, tender dialogue."

Polonaise, A flat major, Opus 53.....Frederic Chopin

"Imagine a gorgeous castle of ancient structure, with many towers, halls, passages and bridges. In it, in the centre ball-room, a fine band plays a majestic Polonaise. The couples in national dress, war-like with swords, glide dignified, accentuating with the step the rhythm. In the middle part, E major, we may see the approach of a cavalcade, maybe after a triumph . . . in the buoyant march following the first couple passes gaily into adjacent halls, then glides over the distant bridges, enters the park, and only after such an excursion when they all seem lost do we hear them approaching by another entrance, and with them the strains of triumphal music."—Klezczynski.